



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

## STATE OF IOWA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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**For Immediate Release**

### **College Community Principal Receives \$25,000 Milken Award**

(Des Moines, October 15, 2002) – A College Community educator today received a 2002 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. Ying Ying Chen, Prairie Crest principal, learned of the honor during a surprise announcement made in person by Governor Thomas J. Vilsack and Jane Foley of the Milken Family Foundation. The Milken Educator honor carries with it a \$25,000 financial award.

In addition to exceptional education talent, Milken honorees are recognized for their strong leadership and ability to motivate both students and colleagues.

Vilsack noted Chen's demonstration of these qualities and more during the award presentation. "Ying Ying has a broad focus on student achievement by emphasizing early intervention, strong literacy programs, student accountability and the necessity for a strong parent-community-school relationship," Vilsack said.

Chen began her career as an ESL teacher in Taiwan. She later served as a secondary special education teacher and a Title I curriculum and instructional supervisor. She has been an elementary principal for the past 10 years, three years in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and seven years with the College Community School District. In addition to her school leadership responsibilities, she is a current member of the Board of Educational Examiners under the Department of Education.

Chen is one of two Iowa elementary educators receiving the Milken Educator Award for 2002. The other recipient, Paula Olson of Phenix Elementary in West Des Moines, was notified in a separate surprise announcement earlier today.

A blue ribbon committee appointed by the Iowa Department of Education selects the Milken Educator recipients in a confidential process that does not include a nomination or application.

Chen and Olson will be presented their \$25,000 awards during ceremonies at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles in June 2003. A total of 100 educators in 46 states will receive a 2002 Milken Educator Award. The award goes to secondary educators one year, followed by elementary educators the next.

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